GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2805
ANSWERED ON:02.08.2017
Disruption in Telecom Services
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken note of the instances of frequent disruptions in telecommunication services including internet facility post extreme weather occurrences across the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the number of such instances occurred during each of the last three years and the current year, rural area/urban area-wise and State/UT-wise along with the reasons therefor; and

(c) the remedial measures taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) & (b) Instances of disruptions in telecommunication services due to extreme weather occurrences/ natural disaster has been reported from time to time. The details along with reasons thereof are annexed (Annexure).

(c) For mitigating the effects of disaster on telecommunications services, the Department of Telecommunications has been issuing guidelines from time to time to allow intra-circle roaming arrangement between the Telecom Service providers. Periodic monitoring about status of telecom services in the affected areas have been carried out during the disruption of telecommunications services due to natural disaster and all efforts were made to ensure that the services are restored as soon as possible. The respective Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) has also been taking actions for monitoring and early restoration of services in case of any disruption due to extreme weather condition/ natural disaster. Some of the actions taken by the TSPs include:

(i) Setting up of special control room (called War Room) for close monitoring of all alarms in the affected areas.
(ii) Making available critical spares at Hub / BSC (Base Station Controller)/ RNC (Radio Network Controller) locations to minimize the impact.
(iii) Making available sufficient diesel stock, whenever there is a forecast about probable cyclone/ floods.
(iv) Deployment of additional vehicles/ manpower in the affected areas for quick movement of spares/ technical manpower for early restoration of services.
(v) Seeking immediate help from local authorities in obtaining necessary permissions for movement of vehicles, getting diesel on priority etc. for early restoration of services.

In order to standardize the actions to be followed by various stakeholders, a Standing Operating Procedure-2017 has been issued in March 2017 by the Department of Telecommunications for early restoration of Telecommunication network during disasters. Instructions have been issued to TSPs for public alert and mandatory Intra-Circle roaming facility during disaster.

Annexure
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SN Name of License Service Area Year Details/ Reasons
1 UP (West) 2016 During first week of July 2016, Chamoli and Pithoragarh districts of Uttarakhand was affected by landslide due to heavy rains and cloudbursts. There was disruption of telecommunication services in these areas.
2 Andhra Pardesh 2014 & 2016 In 2014, the Hud-Hud Cyclone affected North coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh leading to disruption of telecom services. Again, in 2016 due to cyclone Vardha the telecom services were disrupted in the affected areas of Andhra Pradesh.
3 North East 2017 Cyclone Mora affected districts of Chandel, Kohima, Moreh, Churachandpur, Senapti, Phek, Wokha, Gomati, South Tripura, Sepahijala, West Tripura, Dhalai, Khowai, Unakoti, North Tripura,Aizawl , Champai , Lunglei , Mamit , Kolasib , Lawngtlai , Saiha , Serchhip East Khasi Hills District, West Khasi Hills District, West Jaintia Hills District , East Jaintia Hills District, North Garo Hills District , West Garo Hills District, South Garo Hills District , East Garo Hills District, South West Garo Hills District and Mokokchung
4 Tamil Nadu 2015 & 2016 In December 2015, heavy unprecedented floods ravaged Chennai and declared as a national disaster. During that period the mobile communications and internet traffic were affected to a larger extent.
Again, in December 2016, mighty unprecedented Cyclone ravaged Chennai and declared as a national disaster. During that period the mobile communications and internet traffic were affected to a large extent due to OFC cable cut at numerous locations due to fallen and uprooted trees
5 Jammu and Kashmir 2014 There were disruptions in telecommunication services including internet facility due to flood in Kashmir Valley.

6 Odisha 2014 There were disruptions in telecommunication services during Hud-Hud Cyclone which hit Odisha coastal areas.
7 Assam 2014, 2015, 2016 & 2017 Due to floods in Assam, the telecommunications services were disrupted in the affected areas in the year 2014, 2015& 2016. Similarly, in current year also, telecommunication services are disrupted due to ongoing floods.
8 Gujarat 2017 There are disruptions in telecommunication services during ongoing floods in multiple districts (Bharuch/ Ahmedabad).
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